



## Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

### Purpose

To outline the processes for handling complaints and appeals received by United Colleges of Australia from its students, staff and stakeholders.

All complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and dealt with fairly, efficiently and effectively

### Scope

This policy applies to all students, all staff members of the college including trainers and assessor and any third parties (e.g. education agents).

### Definitions

College	United Colleges of Australia
Complaint	A statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable
Appeal	Make a request for a reversal/change of a decision (e.g. assessment decisions)
Training Ombudsman	Independent and impartial third-party, appointed to investigate complaints
Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness	Allowing parties subject to a decision made by the college, or anyone who has allegations against them, to tell their side of the story before a decision is made.
Student Management System	Axcelerate

### Policy

The college ensures:

- The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness is adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process.
- All complaints and appeals must be treated fairly, professionally and transparently and without the repercussion for making such complaint or appeal.
- The complaints and appeals procedures are made publicly available such as through website.
- The process of a complaint or appeal must be commenced within 10 working days of it being received by the college.
- The complainant or appellant is given the opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost and be assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.
- All complaints and appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable. In the event when more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the complainant/appellant will be notified in writing of this including the rationale as to why such timeframe is required. Regular updates are provided to students on the progress of the matter.



- When an outcome has been reached, the student must be informed of the outcome (in writing) including the detailed reason/s of the outcome. When the student is not successful in the college’s complaint and appeal processes, the student will be informed of their options for external appeal within 10 working days of the outcome being communicated. The contact details of an external party (independent of both the college and complainant/appellant) are provided.
- When internal or external complaint or appeal process results in a decision that favours the student, the college will immediately implement any decisions, recommendations and/or corrective action. The student will be notified of such action.
- Written records of the complaint or appeal, including the outcomes and detailed reasoning are kept securely.
- Any opportunity for improvement will be logged in Continuous Improvement Register and any appropriate corrective actions are taken to mitigate the likelihood of future occurrences.

Complaints and appeals may be made in regards with but not limited the following issues:

- Enrolment process
- Education agents
- Campus facilities and resources (including the kitchen resources)
- Training
- Staff
- Academic results
- Course progress
- Discrimination, harassment and bullying
- Fees and refunds
- Other students of the college
- Any other party directly or indirectly related to the college

Grounds for appeal may include but not limited to the following:

- Administrative inadequacies e.g. inaccuracy in recording progress
- Inadequate resources e.g. physical resources or inexperienced/unqualified staff members
- Shortcomings in the conduct of assessment e.g. alternative assessment methods were not available
- Assessment requirements specified by the assessor were unreasonably or prejudicially conducted
- Barriers to access e.g. unreasonable requirements as pre-condition to assessment
- Equal opportunity discrimination e.g. against age, gender, race, disability.

**Procedure**

Complaints & Appeals Procedure	Responsible Person
1. Advise the complainant/appellant to resolve the matter with relevant person informally.	
2. If the above step is unsuccessful, provide the complainant/appellant with the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure and associated form to complete. The completed form is to be sent to <a href="mailto:info@unitedcolleges.edu.au">info@unitedcolleges.edu.au</a>	



3. Acknowledge the receipt of the complaint or appeal in writing within three (3) working days.	Q&C Team
4. Notify the complainant/appellant the opportunity to be accompanied or assisted by a support person during the meeting	
5. Handle the complaint and appeal fairly, professionally and transparently. Ensure adherence to Privacy Act throughout the whole process.	
6. Appoint an independent person if the complaint or appeal directly relates to the parties responsible for handling complaints and appeals.	
7. Commence the assessment of complaint/appeal within ten (10) working days of it being received.  Ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parties involved have the opportunity to present their case.</li> <li>• The complaint/appeal is discussed in the Q&amp;C Meeting</li> </ul>	
8. Finalise the complaint/appeal within twenty (20) working days.	
9. In the event when more than 60 days (particularly when the matter is overly complex) are required to finalise the complaint/appeal, notify the complainant/appellant of the outcome in writing including why such timeframe is required. Keep the complainant/appellant updated of the progress every fortnight (2 weeks)	
10. Notify the outcome of the complaint/appeal in writing within five (5) business days of the decision being made including the reasons of the outcome. If the complaint/appeal is not successful, advise the complainant/appellant of their right to access a free and independent external body within 10 working days of the decision being communicated. The details of the external body are provided in the policy and procedure.	
11. If the internal or external complaints handling or appeal process results in the decision or recommendation in the favour of the student, immediately implement the decision or recommendation and take the preventive or corrective action/s required by the decision and advise the student of that action.	
12. Enter the outcome of complaint/appeal into a Continuous Improvement Register.	
13. Action any corrective actions.	
14. Secure all written records including the completed form, outcomes and detailed reasoning in the Student Management System	



<b>Independent External Body</b>	
<b>Organisation:</b>	Overseas Student Ombudsman ( <a href="http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/">http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/</a> )
<b>Contact point:</b>	Online Complaint Form: <a href="https://forms.business.gov.au/smart-forms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=oco-complaint-form">https://forms.business.gov.au/smart-forms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=oco-complaint-form</a> Call: 1300 362 072 (within Australia) Outside Australia call +61 2 6276 0111. Enquiries 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday (AEDT) Postal: GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601. Melbourne Office: Level 6, 34 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

### Related Documentation

- Complaints and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Appeals Acknowledgement Letter
- Complaints and Appeals Email Template
- Complaints and Appeals Outcome Email Template

### Document Control

Policy Owner:	United Colleges of Australia
Endorsed By:	CEO
Person Responsible for Implementation:	Q&C Team
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